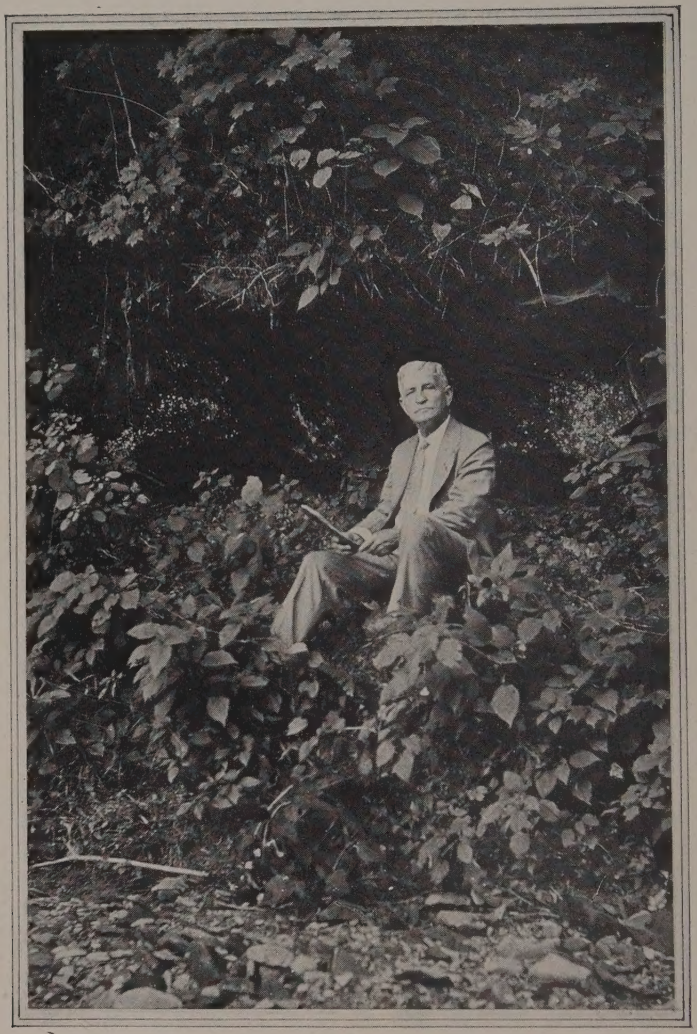
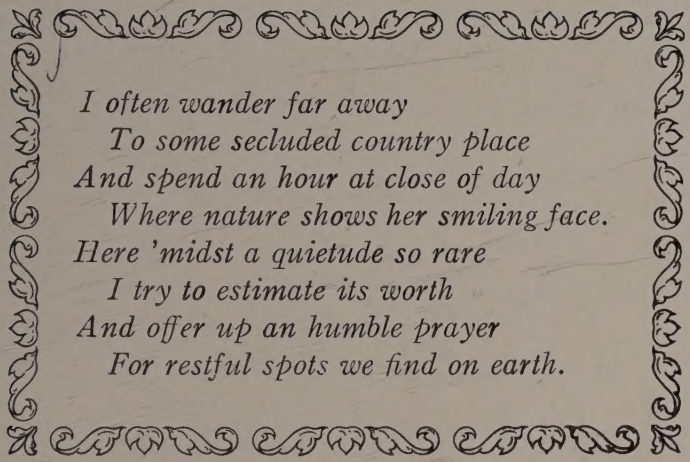
POEMS *for* LEISURE HOURS



Sincerely Yours
Perry F. McCarty



I often wander far away
To some secluded country place
And spend an hour at close of day
Where nature shows her smiling face.
Here 'midst a quietude so rare
I try to estimate its worth
And offer up an humble prayer
For restful spots we find on earth.

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PERRY F. MCCARTY

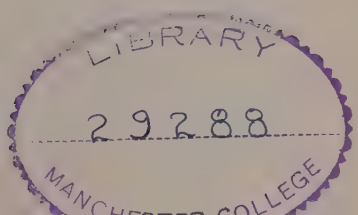
POEMS
FOR
LEISURE HOURS

BY

PERRY F. McCARTY

PICTURES
BY
DR. McCORD

To my daughter
CLARA
This Book
is
Affectionately Dedicated



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EARTH'S BEAUTIES

If I could train my pen to write
  Of nature's gifts I call to mind;
With grateful heart, each line would note
  The beauties that my soul would find.
I'd take the time to write each day
  From every place I chanced to go,
Telling of marvelous things I found
  In all my wanderings to and fro.

I'd mention planes of living green;
  Then write of giant forest trees
Near sparkling rivers hurrying on
  To reach their home in billowy seas.
I'd see where fertile valleys sleep
  Between great mountain summits high
Like warriors standing there on guard
  With spires that almost touch the sky.

Then I would be constrained to write
  Of every bright God given morn,
"Here comes the sun, with joyous light
  When faith and hope again are born."
For then we catch a glimpse of heaven
  When morning sun-beams kiss the flowers
And buds burst open with their smiles
  To match the brightness of the hours.

At noon-time I would want to tell
How distant landscape holds our gaze;
And of the grand and glorious day
The lines would sing our words of praise.
Then as the sun would sink to rest,
I'd want to write how skies would hold
Full length along the horizon bar
The tints of rose and burnished gold.

What raptures come when day is done;
When earth is clothed in soft twilight,
Then God has chosen moon and stars
To crown and glorify the night.
There in between the daylight hours
This soft light of the night will show
From evening hours till morning comes
The paths of earth for us to go.

A cloud of sorrow may appear
And cast its shadow o'er the way
But if it mars the scene for us
I'll not record it here today.
But for the splendors given us,
For every joy that comes to me,
I'm sure I'll have a thankful heart
For all the beauties that I see.

OUR FRIENDS

The earthly treasures we possess
And value most throughout the years
Are friends we know, and claim as ours,
That cling to us through joy and tears.

In summing up the wealth of earth
Counting the jeweled crowns of kings,
Comparing with true friendship's worth,
They seem as only common things.

If we possessed the richest mines
With all the gold and diamonds there,
The charm of riches would be lost
Had we no friends our joys to share.

Contentment is our lot each day
No matter what the weather lends
Through sunshine or the thickening gloom,
When we are rich with loyal friends.

THE OLD HOME

How glad I am just once again to be
Where I was born and tramp the old places o'er,
And look with longing eyes on every bush and tree
That grows about this dear old cabin door.

My parents toiled here through the weary day
From early morn until the setting sun,
Cheering each other on the tiresome way,
Singing the old time hymns when day was done.

Here where each summer's sun and dew
Coax wild flowers back to gay bloom once again
With colors bright and of the rarest hue;
They whisper love and cheer, to hearts of men.

Hiding away from each disturbing strife
And dreaming now that I'm a child once more,
Forgetting all the toil and cares of life,
I linger near this old time cabin door.

OLD GLORY

Old Glory, we are proud of you,
With all the shimmer and the shine
Of your bright colors, fair to see,
Our banner of the free, divine.
Your field of blue is like the sky,
With stars of virtue shining through
To light the valiant hosts of earth
Who marched to victory with you.

Your folds that ripple in the breeze,
With red and white stripes, side by side,
Have led in freedom's cause on earth
Where loyal patriots fought and died.
They followed you o'er mountain tops,
Through valleys, and across the sea.
Proud symbol of a righteous cause,
Our flag, the flag of liberty.

So now in peace, you've grown to be
A flag where every loyal thread
Is woven through with memories dear
Of those who followed where you led.
You were a banner made for peace,
But to defend a freedom's right,
You took your place on battlefields
And lead an army in their fight.

We honor you, because we know
  Your stars and stripes forever hold
The love of freedom that is ours
  In every gleaming silken fold.
You float in glorious splendor now,
  The flag our fathers learned to love;
Banner of peace and righteousness
  You surely came from Heaven above.

No wonder we're so proud of you,
  And hold you sacred through the years,
Emblem of ours, Red, White and Blue,
  You wave in peace and dry our tears.
Achievement you have gained at last,
  Your colors tell a wondrous story;
No other name is grand enough
  So we have christened you "Old Glory".

DECORATION DAY

Many years have passed away,
And now there's just a few
Of the men of Eighteen Sixty-one,
Then boys, that wore the blue.
But we remember them today
As true and loyal braves,
By placing richest garlands
On these sleeping soldiers' graves.

History tells of bitter conflict
In a sad and troubled world;
How they followed into battle
Our loved stars and stripes unfurled;
How they marched to save the Union,
At sound of drum and fife,
Leaving a mother's tear stained cheek,
A sweetheart, or a wife.

Plows were left to stand and rust,
Fields were left untilled;
Many never came back again
To see their hopes fulfilled.
They thought of loved ones left behind
Through many a lonely night;
The folks at home would listen
For the news from every fight.

Youthful soldiers lost in battle
When the cannon they would face
Must be mourned by loving mothers
Longing for their last embrace.
A number of the boys returned;
For many friends would grieve;
Some came back with faded coats
That showed an empty sleeve.

There are some who still remember
How they marched in grand array
To save the Union for us,
So we honor them today.
Where the noble dead lie sleeping
In this land they fought to save
We drop a flower, a tear, a flag,
On every hallowed grave.

CHILDREN OF LONG AGO

Where are the children we used to know,
The little children of long ago?
They seem to have vanished into the night
But I remember their step so light,
And their lips and cheeks just like the rose,
Where have they gone do you suppose?

I remember too, just how they'd play,
And how their clothes were soiled each day.
Then, how often their mother would peep
Into the room where they fell asleep,
And find the dust on the little brown feet.
Still clinging there, since they played in the street.

So many things I remember today;
To them life was only meant for play.
But they were so happy and full of joy,
Each little rosy cheeked girl and boy,
That I never could find the heart to say
Trouble may come to you some day.

Now, since they are lost from sight,
I find myself longing each day and night
For the innocent faith, the sweetness and bliss,
That I found woven into each childish kiss.
I have been looking, but can't find a face
Exactly like theirs, though I've looked every place.

I often see children out in the street
That I think are just as nice and as sweet,
But they're not the same ones I knew long ago,
So I have quit searching and think now I know
Just what became of the ones I knew then,
They have all grown up to be women and men.

I know them at last and detect on the breeze
The perfume they caught from blossoming trees.
Although they are older, and some of them gray,
By looking real close, I know them today.
I never thought then how old they might grow,
These children I knew in theyears long ago.

THE FLU

Dad burn, ef I ain't went and tuck the flu.
And now I'm wonderin', kin I ever pull through?
Ef you've got anything to recommend, by-jing,
Towards gettin' rid o' the pesky thing
I'll give all I got without bein' sued,
Then add on the whole of my life's gratitude.

Why I feel so blamed awful most of the night,
Coughin' and sneezin' and wishin' fer light
Of another bright day to show up once more,
And yit, when it comes, I'm worse than before.
I'd die ef I could, without any defense,
But don't feel like payin' the funeral expense.

I can't think of anything now in creation
Among the ailments that come to the nation
That I hate quite as much, and ruther not meet
As the one called the flu I have tried to defeat.
Pizen ivy is bad; mumps and measles are too,
But don't aggravate like what doc' calls the flu.

The way I feel now about earthly things,
I'd ruther be covered with bumble-bee stings
Than have my head swelled up big as a cheese
Almost fallin' off every time that I sneeze.
If the flu looks fer me agin in this section
I hope the fool thing will lose the direction.

TO ONE I LOVE

I've missed you when the day was bright,
I've longed for you night after night.
Oh, how I wish that I could grasp
And keep you now and hold you fast.

But you have always seemed so shy;
Throughout the years you've passed me by.
When I have met you in the street
You hurried by on flying feet.

You look so good, I've always planned
To reach and clasp you in my hand
And work day after day for you,
Proving my love was strong and true.

But when I asked you to be mine
You smiled and said, "Perhaps, sometime."
The only time you're near, it seems,
Is when I see you in my dreams.

You've won my heart, and yet I see
That you love others more than me.
But after all I'm for you still,
You little old five dollar bill.

THE PATH THAT LEADS HOME

There was a time when all our ways
Were paths of joy in our childhood days.
That was before we learned to know
Of the rougher roads we had to go;
Where a burden of care was loaded on
And all of our time for play had gone.

I remember now a path that led
Down by the brook, where overhead
The drooping boughs of the elm trees,
With green leaves quivering in the breeze,
Grew in clusters to deepen the shade
Over the pool where we stopped to wade.

Then a little farther on, we'd find
A place where wild grapes grew, and vined,
And became such a tangled mass o'erhead
They shut out the sun where our pathway led.
Weary at last, we would stop and rest
Where the song birds hid away their nest.

Memory now calls back the days
We wandered through the evening haze,
Watching the evening shadows creep
That told us it was time for sleep.
Then, the favorite path for us to roam
Was the shortest one that led back home.

With weary feet we tramped along
As we heard a distant vesper song
That made us long to turn our face
Back again to the old home place.
There are other paths we love to roam
But none like the one that leads back home.

A MOTHER'S DREAM

We often see them along our way,
Some loving mother, old and gray,
Falling asleep, forgetting her care,
In the dreams that hover about her chair.
Fancies that come at an age like this
Must fill the hours with untold bliss.

Or, when visions of other days appear
With golden treasures that come to cheer;
For she croons again the lullabys sung
When happy children about her clung,
Or fell asleep from her soothing charms
As they nestled close in her loving arms.

A nectar sweet as the honey-bee sips
Is found in the words from a mother's lips.
The dream like a dazzling river of joy
Flows on for the quiet hour's employ,
While fragrance of lilacs fills the air
And leaves a caress on her silver hair.

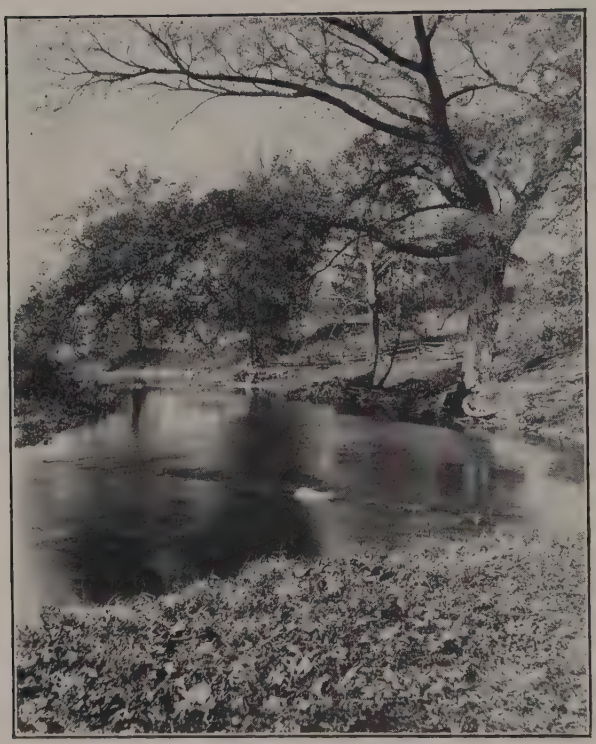
Much of her youthful joy it seems
Returns again in sweet day dreams.
We like to think of a mother's love
As a treasure sent from Heaven above,
And the head that now is silver gray
Will wear a golden crown some day.

TOMORROW

He told me only yesterday, when the ten
he asked to borrow,
"That as sure as he was living he would
pay me back tomorrow."
But the ten he never paid me, yet he's
living just the same!
I can't figure out the reason why
tomorrow never came.

A nice dinner invitation, written out
so cute and sweet,
Was received by me which stated, that
tomorrow's when we eat.
I called at the appointed time, but oh,
what gloom and sorrow
When they said, you're wrong about the date,
today is not tomorrow.

I don't know why tomorrow never comes
like folks have said.
Sometimes I think I've reached it, but it's
still a day ahead.
I have solved by calculation, many
of life's vexing sums,
But the one that puzzles me the most
is when tomorrow comes.



LICK CREEK

I have looked the country over
  And found many a fond retreat;
But for down-right satisfaction
  Clear old Lick Creek's got them beat.
When we took the path to glory
  We knew then our feet would go
Across the fields until they stopped
  Right where old Lick Creek's waters flow.

Barefooted, with a two piece suit,
You would never guess how quick
We could slip out-side the garments
And dive into old Lick Creek.
There the water, clear and sparkling,
Hastened on from pool to pool,
Laughing, singing as it rippled,
Till it stopped in shade to cool.

In our boyhood days no music
Ever reached the youthful soul
Like the gurgle of the water
Just above the swimmin' hole.
If you're looking for a beauty spot
And inquire of me the way,
"Just take the road to Lick Creek",
Are the words you'd hear me say.

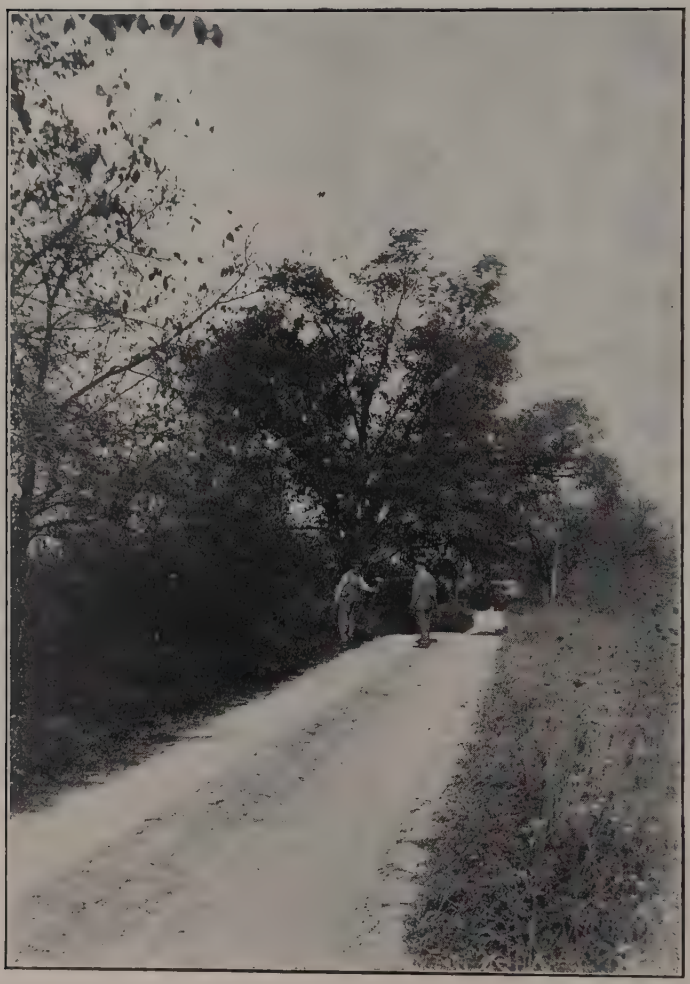
The warm days of the summer
Is the time I like the best;
Shedding coat and shoes, and troubles,
I drop on its bank to rest.
There, minutes weave a web of hours,
Till I fall asleep and dream
That I've had a glimpse of heaven
From the banks of this old stream.

SHADOWS

Shadows sometimes find their way
  Over pathways once so bright,
Shutting out the light of day,
  Leaving phantoms of the night.
How much deeper must they grow
  When the loved ones we have known
Leave us waiting here below
  To walk earthly paths alone.

Shadows darker than before
  Lengthen out, until the gloom
Reaches to our dwelling door
  Stealing into every room.
Happy days were those we knew
  When a fragrance filled the hours
From sweet blossoms as they grew,
  That have turned to withered flowers.

But a light of hope is seen
  Piercing through the deepest gloom;
Growing brighter in between
  Jasper walls and earthly tomb.
Light from heaven we are told
  Casts a radiance all the way,
Gleaming from the streets of gold
  Where our loved ones walk today.



A COUNTRY ROAD

I get lonesome in the city
With its buildings built so high
That all the blue of heaven you see
Is a little patch of murky sky.
Where friendship with its greeting
Is not so warm as when
I walk along some country road
And meet, and talk with country-men.

I like the city for a-while,
Its proud and high built walls;
Where boasting of achievement
They walk through stately halls.
But when I'm there, I long again
For the folks with their abode
Built plenty large for friendship,
Near some good old country road.

When life's cares become a burden,
And I'm weary with the load,
The most alluring place I find
Is some peaceful country road.
There I can find contentment
In the sunshine, or the shade,
Along the country highway
Far away from marts of trade.

I wander slow along the way,
  But the farther on I roam
Amid these restful scenes, I find
  I'm feeling more at home.
Joyous welcome comes to meet me
  From wild rose bush, and tree,
Till all else has been forgotten
  But this earthly ecstacy.

I linger there till day is done,
  And then the soft moonbeams
Light up the path like other nights
  I see so oft' in dreams.
You remember, as well as I,
  Slow walks in pale moonlight
And the promise of love forever
  As you strolled along that night.

To loiter on this country way,
  Content with the hours of bliss,
Makes me wish all future steps
  Could be on a road like this.
For here is the song bird's music,
  Sweeter than flute, or lyre,
To charm me as I ramble on
  With thoughts of the heavenly choir.

REGARDIN' THE MULE

The most deceivin' thing, as a general rule,
Is a sleepy eyed innocent lookin' mule.
For, at a time when you'd almost swear
That mule wuz thinkin' up a prayer
He wuz makin' plans right then to balk
So's you'd have to git out and walk.

No matter how much you've been to school,
You jest can't know all about a mule.
Fer when you think he'd be most quiet
You're on the verge of an all fired riot.
Well, any way I'm here to state
That many a feller's found out too late.

A chap I know'd, fooled with one a spell,
Said "he wuz sure 'at he could tell
Without the least durn bit of a doubt
Jest what a mule wuz thinkin' about."
But the mule went East, the man went West,
The County Coroner knows the rest.

The widder wuz married after a while
To a feller a whole lot different style.
He declared to me, "a man wuz a fool
To place any confidence in a mule."
Fer he wuz always plumb dead set
Agin a mule, so he's livin' yet.

MORNING

The mystery and gloom of night,
Like curtains shutting out the light,
Are drawn aside, that we may view
The scenes of yesterday we knew;
While stars of night all hide away
When God begins to make the day.

Rose tinted threads of light are spun
From colors of the morning sun.
Song birds awake and sing their lays
While we join in with notes of praise
To Him who sends the morning light
That fills our souls with such delight.

When morning comes, another day
Is given us our part to play.
With joyful hearts again we run
To finish tasks we had begun.
While all along the traveled miles
The morning sun looks down and smiles.

A morning sunbeam makes us glad,
And we forget the gloom we had
Before the shadows of the night
Were chased away by silver light.
Now, garlands of the morning hour
Are crowning every hill and tower.

We're thankful for the rest of night,
But more inspired by morning light
That shows the rose bud dipped in dew
Full laden with a fragrance new.
Now, morning sun lights up the way
And says, "I've come to make the day."

EVENING

Homeward now, we wend our way
Happy if the close of day
Finds our work has been well done
When we face the setting sun.
Now the scenes we love and know
Catch a gleam of sunset's glow.

Lengthening shadows coming on
Show the day is almost gone.
We have spent a day in pleasure
Or have toiled for earthly treasure
When the wealth for you and me
Of the sunset's gold is free.

Scattered notes of a thrush's song
With echoes of sweetness float along,
Trying to sing the world to sleep
Where dusky shadows grow and creep
And almost hide the bush nearby
Where he sings his evening lullaby.

What a pleasure now to meet
Friends of ours we love to greet
When the evening stars' dim light
Looking down bids earth good night.
Twilight hour, the time of rest,
Evening time divinely blessed.

Quiet hours of evening time
Are for us the most sublime.
Friendships of the day unfold
As sweet vows of love are told.
Then we reach through fading light
The quiet portals of the night.

THE OLD MILL

Adding up my sum of pleasures,
  One whole column I could fill
Just recounting days on Fall Creek
  Spent around the Helm's mill.
Wandering east above the mill-dam,
  We would walk green grassy floors
Gilded by the dazzling sunlight
  In between the sycamores.

There above the dam, the water
  Was so smooth and still, and deep,

It looked like we had found it
While the stream was fast asleep.
Then we'd walk along the mill-race
To the mill, where Uncle Sile
Seemed to warm the whole machinery
With his welcome sunny smile.

I recollect the old mill yet,
Weatherbeaten by sun and rain,
Wagons stopping at the door
Filled with bags of golden grain.
Memory paints the picture now,
And puts it in a frame of love,
So true to life that I can see
The fleecy clouds that float above.

We would stand and watch the water
Pouring o'er the mill-dam, where
A wall of silver mist would rise
And shut out every earthly care.
The joyous hours would slip away
From dawn, till evening's sun
Would hide behind the tree tops,
Then, too soon the day was done.

Many happy hours we spent there.
How our hearts would always thrill
When the neighbors called and waited

For their grist, at that old mill.
Their stories were of how they fared
When times were bad, or good,
That way we kept in touch you see
With all the neighborhood.

The old mill-site is bare today.
The miller's gone to rest.
From what we know of his deeds below
He is now at home with the blest.
The sunlight falls on this scene we love
With a mellow gleam of light,
But the valley mill is as silent now
As the stillness of the night.

FLEETING TIME

We haven't any time to spare,
We ought not lose a single minute.
Sometimes an hour that's left to act
Is worth the world and all that's in it.
The things we put off doing now
Will have to be done on the morrow;
It's just like paying debts we owe
When all the money we must borrow.

We hardly know how great the loss,
How priceless are the hours each day
Until we see them come and go,
And learn they never come to stay.
Procrastination with it's wiles
Is so deceiving to us all,
That many golden years of life
Are lost to us beyond recall.

If we keep busy through the years,
Just lending help where it belongs,
From tree tops all along our way
The birds will sing their sweetest songs.
If we would live our lives the best
And sweeten up the traveled miles
Our happiness will be complete
If we turn tear drops into smiles.

THE HOME COMING

I'll bet no one could ever guess
  The reason I'm so filled with glee!
And the way that mother's actin'
  She's flustrated more than me.
Why she's cleaned all the house so nice
  You wouldn't think that we lived in it,
Because our children's comin' back
  To pay the old home folks a visit.

And they'll bring all their children too,
  That means they'll tear up jack, but la!
I can put up with all their pranks
  While they're callin' me grandpa.
It seems but just a little while
  Since our own children were that small,
But thirty years slip by so quick
  It 'pears like hardly any time, at all.

Last night we stayed up awful late,
  Just talkin' 'bout the days we spent
In tryin' to keep our family
  On the farm we had to rent.
I remember how we spanked them
  When we found they was to blame
For doin' some fool thing, or other,
  But we loved them all the same.

But now they're comin' home again,
And mother and me can hardly wait
To see them drivin' up the lane
Then crowdin' through the old yard gate,
That's why I'm tickled and so proud,
And mother's filled the pantry shelves
Plumb full of pies and doughnuts,
Lots more'n we could use ourselves.

I wish to goodness they could stay;
It's lonesome like for mother now,
Though I keep busy 'round the place
I find I'm lonesome too, somehow.
But we expect a glorious time
Just talkin' over old times then,
And we'll be tickled as can be
To have the children home again.

MANDA AND ME

We've lived right here on this farm,
For forty years and a little more
Mixin' hopes with disappointments,
Plantin' a few flowers by the door,
Watchin' the sun rise in the east,
Workin' away 'till it set in the west,
'Till I said to Manda one afternoon
Let's travel a little, and take a rest.

So, finally we got out the map
Of the whole United States
And looked her over carefully,
Then figured the railroad rates
To places that we'd read about
And had always wanted to go.
She picked on a place away down east,
But my heart was set on Mexico.

I couldn't blame her a bit for longin'
To go back to our old home you see.
Says I, "All right, we'll travel that way
It don't make much difference to me."
Then we talked of the days of our courtship,
When the old fashioned roses so red
Perfumed the path from the gate to the house
By the side of the old pansy bed.

So we begun to plan for the trip
By buyin' some things we must take.
I had to have a brand new suit;
Manda had some dresses to make.
But at last we got about ready to go
After worry and packin' for hours.
And now, I says, "we'll be goin' soon,"
When in come old neighbors of ours.

One of these neighbors said to me
In a sort of humorous vein,
"I hate so much to see you go
That I hope you miss your train."
Then the women all hugged Manda,
And smilin' through her tears
She said, "It's hard to leave these folks,
Our friends for forty years."

Now we've come back home to stay
Beneath our own blue sky,
Where almost every day we see
Old neighbors passin' by.
If we should ever leave again
These friends of ours we love,
It will be when God has given us
A pass to the Mansions above.

THE SEASONS

As the seasons come and go,
We see winter with it's snow
In the blossom time of spring
Birds return to nest and sing
Summer comes with sweet perfume
When the rose and lilies bloom
Then for golden autumn days
We pay tribute with our praise.

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WINTER

A mystic silver screen is hung,
And flowers all snug are hid away
Beneath the gems of glittering frost
Just waiting for a summer day.

The sparkling diamonds that we see
Weave magic scenes for us to view,
And take the place for just awhile
Of clover scented drops of dew.

A touch of frost, and autumn leaves
Fall with a russet golden glow.
In tangled clusters now, they lie
Under the drifts of winter snow.

The winter curtain that is drawn
Presents a landscape that is drear
Without the warmth of sunshine,
When the winter time is here.

We gather now with friends of ours,
Forgetting winter storms and snow.
While embers of our fires awake
And warm our hearts to brighter glow.

We sit and doze by ruddy fires,
The winter hours pass swiftly by,
At last we fall asleep, and dream
Of blossom time, and Summer sky.

SPRING

Chill and frost of winter months
Now has passed and gone,
And the spring is here at last,
Golden promise after dawn.

Somber days for us have flown,
Gladness fills our hearts once more
As we feel the sweet warm air
Stealing in through open door.

We're enraptured with the time,
Song birds join with us in praise;
Through the silver clouds above
Heaven seems to smile these days.

After the long winter night
  Wild flowers 'waken now to see
Soft sunlight inviting them
  To spring's glorious jubilee.

Violets hurry from their beds,
  Dress themselves in favorite blue,
When we pass they smile on us,
  Their faces washed in morning dew.

Stars like golden candles now,
  In the sky at night are seen;
Morning sun shows diamonds
  On dewey lawns of verdant green.

The robin's notes sound loud and clear
  On air that's laden with perfume,
For it's the spring time of the year
  And all the world is white with bloom.

SUMMER

Welcome, Summer! the world is glad
  And shouts for joy when you are here!
The blossom time of Spring we had,
  But like you best of all the year.

Through all the winter months this year,
  With every stormy day that passed,
We felt that you would soon be here,
  And now, oh joy! You're here at last.

We miss you so when you're away,
  We miss your sky of azure blue.
We miss your summer smiles each day,
  At twilight, miss the evening dew.

We've searched throughout the land for you.
  You stayed away from us so long;
Since your return so warm and true
  We sing your praise in summer song.

We know for sure that it is you
  By leafy trees and balmy air,
By rose and lily dipped in dew,
  You've come in answer to our prayer.

The matchless glory of each day
  Brings such delight when you are here,
That if we only had our way,
  The Summer Time would last all year.

AUTUMN

Bidding farewell to summer days
Though many charms they hold,
We turn to greet the autumn
Dressed in colors, red and gold.
The harvest time of earth is here
From orchard, farm and field,
A harvest time of joy comes too
With all the fruits they yield.

Green leaves, that clug to every bough
And clothed the forest trees,
Now sail about like tinsel
In the cooling autumn breeze.
And with the quiet grandeur
That we view through mellow haze,
We breathe an air as rich as wine
These wondrous autumn days.

A description of the colors seen
No writer yet has penned,
As the yellow, pink and golden tints
Of woodland seem to blend.
The beauty of the landscape
With every hue and shade
Comes to cheer us in the autumn
When the flowers of summer fade.

Frost has kissed the maple leaves,
And we see them float around
Until they fall in beds of gold
To slumber on the ground.
The enchantment all about us
Makes our praise the more sincere
As we pause to count our blessings
When the autumn time is here.

THE SURPRISE

No wonder folks predicted
He jest couldn't be any good!
Fer he'd picked the poorest parents
Found in all the neighborhood.
His dad was kind o' shiftless like,
Though his mother wuzzn't bad
Considerin' how she had to live,
And the husband that she had.

But a little later on we found
A surprise wuz comin' soon
About the boy we all had said
Would never amount to a picayune.
For he soon learned a lesson
From the plan his dad had taken,
That loafin' didn't help him much
Twoards bringin' home the bacon.

But gee, he had a lot of pride!
So he went to work one day
Helpin' his parents all he could
By bringin' home his extra pay.
There wuz nothin' very strange about
The way his luck had turned,
When he found a hundred cents
In every dollar that he earned.

That's when he painted up their house
Till it looked as good as new,
Then bought a lot of furniture
With some easy chairs for two.
The clothes he dressed them up in
Made 'em look so fine and glad,
We could hardly recognize 'em
As his mother and his dad.

The neighborhood awoke to find
Right in their midst, a boy
That brought the doubting friends of his
A mighty lot of pride and joy.
Then you ought to heard 'em sayin'
With a heap of pomp and show,
He's makin' good jest like I said,
You remember, don't you? I told you so.

There wuz a time the girls in town
Would pass him by along the way,
Then when he'd try to speak to 'em
They managed to look the other way.
But later on you ought to a seen
How soon his poverty wuz forgot,
And how I laughed till I nearly died
When he married the best one of the lot.

UNCLE DAVE

When I first know'd Uncle Dave,
He wuz doin' fairly well,
Had a heap o' stock about him
With some wheat and corn to sell.
He'd got paid out on his eighty
When folks said he never would,
Fer with poor crops and sickness
You would hardly think he could.

But the children kept on growin',
And crowdin' round the fire
Till he had to build a bigger house
And make it right smart higher.
So as there'd be room enough
Fer the boys, and Mary Louise,
The house where they'd been livin'
There wuz hardly room to sneeze.

The buildin' of that house o' his,
Sure put Dave on the hummer,
He spent the last red cent he had
And worked the whole blamed summer.
But finally, 'long late in the fall
They moved to the house that wuz new,
And put down all their carpets
Soon as the carpenters got through.

But more expense wuz comin' to Dave,
His wife said, "Now it jest won't do
That furniture from the old house

Won't do at all fer the new".
Dave wuz plumb give out you see,
Fer he couldn't stand the strain
Of workin' sixteen hours a day
And never stoppin' fer sun or rain.
He said to Nancy, then and there,
"You'll have to wait fer a spell,
I'll buy some furniture later on,
Soon as the hogs will do to sell."
But Nancy wouldn't be put off,
She'd waited fer years she said,
And all she'd done wuz work and save
Since the day that she wuz wed.
The children joined in with Nancy,
And they found a furniture man
In a town nearby who sold his goods
To jest anyone on the payment plan.
But crops next year wuz awful bad,
The payments couldn't be made,
And Dave and Nancy wuz plumb wore out
Tryin' to pull that load upgrade.
But what swamped Dave worst of all,
And it looked 'bout as bad as to steal.
Them boys of his got his name on a note
To buy them an automobile.
The last I remember hearin' o' him
He had moved, and wuz rentin' a place.
I hated like sin to hear of his loss,
And what old Uncle Dave had to face.

LOOKIN' BACKWARD

Lookin' backward finds me longin'
For the old home days that were.
Though our hardships were a plenty
We found many joys to share.
Mixin' in with all the music
That was hitched to every song,
There was many a note of gladness
That would cheer and help along.

Wish I could walk the path again
That lead to the open door,
Where the hit and miss rag carpet
Showed in splendor on the floor.
I'd like to rest in dad's old chair
Before the stone fire-place,
Then, dreamin' back along the way
Recall each kind familiar face.

With all the cares of life forgot,
I'd while away the restful hours
By trampin' o'er the garden paths,
Admirin' mother's old-time flowers.
I remember all the colors yet
That grew to make us glad;
Sweet pinks, larkspur, and hollyhocks,
Were among the kinds she always had.

I'd give the last red cent I have
To jest hang 'round a spell
And get a coolin' drink once more
From the same old family well.
But one thing, I still recollect,
That would chase away my smile,
Was the ax, and buck-saw, calling
From a monstrous old wood pile.

Jest as like as not, the very time
I'd planned to fish, or play,
Dad would say, "You boys get busy.
There's some work to do today."
But lookin' backward now, I see
The happiest times we ever had,
We found in that old home of ours,
With mother, and with dad.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

I'm mighty proud I'm livin'
  In this county, for you see
It's the place where Jim Riley
  Wrote his sweetest poetry.
For some folks it's a struggle
  Writin' sentiments that rhyme,
But it never bothered Riley,
  He could write 'em any time.

Why, he could jes' set down
  And take his pen in hand,
Then without a bit of effort
  Write the best verse in the land.
He found delight in tellin'
  Of the shadders, and the shine
That follered him along the banks
  Of dear old Brandywine.

But better yet than readin' it,
Was to hear him tell the story
Of "Out to Old Aunt Mary's"
And her callin' them to glory.
I never will forget the time
He told about the bear!
And if there'd been a tree about,
You'd a seen me climbin' there.

He'd write about us Hoosiers,
For you see, he knew our ways.
And he'd copy all our sayin's
From way back in early days.
Riley's loving verse has brought us
Such a lot of cheer and fame,
We are always proud to mention
Our James Whitcomb Riley's name

The world would laugh with Riley;
Now, we shed a loving tear,
Because he can't write anymore
For us folks living here.
But up above he'll write about
The things that are divine,
For he can fill the universe
With thoughts that are sublime.

CONTENTMENT

Ike was mighty easy satisfied.
"No use to worry", he always said;
"If you can't do nothin' but jest complain,
Fer as I see, you'd as well be dead".
Then he'd mention folks residin' here
That put in a life time findin' fault,
When if they got pay for runnin' things
They couldn't as much as earn their salt.

He'd read the Bible to build up his faith,
Then thoughtfully lay it away on the shelf.
A little later you'd find him asleep,
Just letting the day provide for itself.
"The scripture wuz mighty consolin' ", he said,
"Specially the promise the Lord would provide".
But depended more on his wife, I think;
I'm just adding this much on the side.

But she kept right on cooking for him,
A problem I never could figure out.
For when she had no wood for the fire
Her loving husband was never about.
It puzzled me more than ever to learn,
And I've thought about it an awful lot,
Just how it happened when dinner was served
He was sure to be right on the spot.

One time it rained for nearly a month,
  But it never worried Ike a bit;
He lit up his pipe and stayed in the house
  Jest waitin' he said, fer the rain to quit.
His garden fence was washed away,
  And he didn't know it for about a week,
But when they told him, he only said,
  "I don't give a darn, long as the roof don't leak."

I used to wonder just what he done
  With all of the year and time to spare.
At last I learned he was working hard
  To keep from being a millionaire.
"I'd ruther be poor and contented," he said;
  "Sleep sound at night, and have my health,
Than be shot up, and scared to death
  By some feller tryin' to get my wealth."

MOTHER'S DAY

The colors we see many wear
In dainty pink, or bright bouquet,
Are not the kind for us, alas;
We wear the white on Mother's Day.

We knew but little in our youth
Of how she toiled with loving hand.
We'd love to tell her since she's gone
To yonder silent twilight strand.

She chose a path for us to walk;
The narrow way we heard her name.
But when our feet would go astray
She kept on loving us the same.

Lingering thoughts of her we prize;
Sweet memories all along the way
Of childhood, and again in youth,
That's why we cherish Mother's Day.

We miss the comfort of her voice
So much since she has passed away.
And now, we wear a snow white flower
To show our love, on Mother's Day.

The radiance of her smile remains,
Locked safe within our hearts to stay.
And with carnations, pure and white,
We reverence her on Mother's Day.

FIDDLIN' JOE

We called him fiddlin' Joe them days.
  Well, to see him draw his bow
You'd been jest like the rest of us,
  You'd a stayed to see the show.
Not a feller wuz his equal
  In the whole blame neighborhood;
We always know'd when Joe wuz there
  That the music would be good.

We'd make up a little money,
  Then we'd tell him what we had,
He'd act a little unconcerned
  And say his rheumatiz wuz bad.
But pshaw, we know'd he'd be there
  With his legs crossed, fiddlin' tunes,
As long as there wuz couples left
  A dancin' in the rooms.

With trousers in his boot tops
  He'd walk clean cross a farm,
A climbin' fences in the dark
  With his fiddle under arm.
But say, when he'd git started once,
  I don't 'low you ever heard
His equal any place on earth,
  When he play'd The Mockin' Bird.

They'd go fer miles to hear him,
  Even if they had to walk.
But the distance wuz forgotten
  When Joe made his fiddle talk.
Why, he could play a soothin' strain
  So fine, that drowsiness would creep
Out through the air about us
  Till we'd almost go to sleep.

I've heard some music in my time,
  Fer I've been inclined to roam.
But none could ever match him
  When he played us Home Sweet Home.
Wish I could hear him play once more
  The tunes that were so dear,
Then I'd grow young again you see
  And feel like livin' here.

WHERE THE WEST BEGINS

The west begins where men of might
Stand up and battle for the right;
Where church spires pointing towards the sky,
Are shaded by the smoke on high
From factories in that busy land
Employing every idle hand
That doesn't till the fertile soil
Which yields to men of honest toil.

Who, working through sunshine and rain
Gather the fruits and golden grain,
And thank the Lord, who forgives their sins
And lets them live where the west begins.
Where men are heroes, and women are queens,
In this land of hope and fondest dreams.
Oh, how I love the people there,
Where friends their joys and sorrows share.

I long to reach and clasp the hand
Of everyone throughout the land
Where I have seen for many years
Their sympathy through honest tears.
When Gabriel's trumpet sounds for me,
I'll pray the Lord to let me be
Just where I am, where friendship wins,
In the good old state where the west begins,
Right here in Indiana.

BILL

Bill never fell in love with work.
The fact is, he would always shirk.
He'd say, I want to work, but not
Just now.
He never liked the smell of hay
On any June or July day
Till other hands had put it in
The mow.

It seemed to be his fondest wish
To loaf along some stream and fish;
But I have seen him hang around
And wait
Until the sun was hot, then try
To get some neighbor passing by
To lend a hand and help him
Dig the bait.

Bill wouldn't marry any girl,
No matter how her hair would curl,
And yet, there was lot of them
In town.
But should he ever chance to wed
And become a household's head
I'll bet you he gets married
Sitting down.

I have often wondered why
Bill at work was always shy,
But the only thing that I can think
To mention,
He expects that friends he made
While he rested in the shade
Will all chip in and pass him out
A pension.

MY NAME

There are some folks laying claim
And are using the same name
As the one I've always thought
Belonged to me.
While the name is not so fine,
I am sure that it is mine
For I've owned it since my birthday,
Don't you see.

But simetimes, I think they might
Just be using it for spite,
For they could easy take their pen
And sign
A thousand other names
That no mortal ever claims
Without spelling and pronouncing it
Like mine.

I don't think they are so proud
To have me in their crowd,
But I am sure to be there
Without fail.
Though a lot of them are saints,
I must listen to complaints
That a number of them ought to
Be in jail.

But some are not to blame
Just for writing it the same,
Or for thinking that this world
Of ours is flat.
They may be short on learning,
And for knowledge are still yearning,
So I'll never change my name
Because of that.

Some with other names may say
That we folks are common clay
And will never reach the pinnacle
Of fame.
But to this, I must reply
Many smarter men than I
Do not hesitate to use the
Name I claim.

KINDLY SERVICE

Earth's landscapes fair were given free,
That we might find some spot serene
Where nature holds for you and me
The splendors of an earthly scene.
Here God works out his generous plan
That nature's beauty may be ours,
But leaves a man and woman's hand
To fashion garlands from the flowers.

We saw that man, his love expressed,
By planting trees along the way
Where weary travelers might find rest
And enjoy their shade, in the heat of day.
Then from their branches reaching high
Warmed by the sun, and moistened by rain,
His friends could catch, in passing by,
Notes from the song bird's sweet refrain.

She planted flowers so rich and rare,
When they were kissed by sun and dew
Their colors were so bright and fair
You'd think they had copied the rainbow's hue.
Then all of her friends rejoiced to know
Of the sweet perfume throughout the land
Because the flowers she helped to grow
Were planted by her loving hand.

Others thought of the many needs
Among the lonely and the sad
So they planted a lot of kindly deeds
And helped to make the whole world glad.
If we expect to please the Lord,
We must gather in some golden sheaves
For we have no promise of reward
When the harvest is only withered leaves.

DAYS OF YORE

I often think of other days
And friends I used to know,
Of places and the times we had
In the good old long ago.
Memory tells me how they looked,
And what was said and done
Back there in our school days
When life was full of fun.

I know our clothes were not so good
As some I've worn since then;
Our mothers cut our hair those days
And called us little men
That might be president some day
If we would mind the rule
And study just our level best
All through the days of school.

I don't know one that's president
Among that bunch of boys,
And yet at each election
They were there with all their noise
To help elect some able man
Their folks at home would choose,
And then we'd all help ratify
No matter if we'd lose.

The girls that went to school with us
To whom our notes were penned,
I'm sure the color in their cheeks
The roses had to lend.
They were so sweet and handsome,
Wore their hair in braids a lot,
And we, who saw them that way,
Fell in love, right on the spot.

I like the folks I meet these days
With friendship warm and true,
And I'm as happy as can be,
But I want to say to you
The ones I knew in days of yore,
And have tested many a year,
Have been a fortune to me
I could bank on every year.

I'm not remembering their mistakes,
But think of good they've done,
Sometimes it's hard to keep the path
Where the race of life is run.
In searching for faults of others
On the road down here below,
We might lose sight of the crown we seek
And the path where our feet should go.

THEN AND NOW

Yes sir, the old town's changed a lot
Since the time when you and I
Living right here on the spot
Watched the Bee Line Trains go by.
Main street then, was three squares long.
But the part we thought the best
Was where Statts Street runs along
Five or six squares east and west.

I'm not forgetting the folks who dwelt
Where they faced the railroad track.
And you know I've always felt
A lot of love, when looking back,
For these old time pioneers
That were mostly poor to see
Who lived here in early years
And were friends to you and me.

How I'd like to meet them now,
Just to show them up and down,
Praising them the while somehow
For their lives in this old town.
Locking arms with them, I'd walk
Down the length of some paved street
Stopping now and then to talk
When some good old friend we'd meet.

No brick buildings in the town.
Some were log, but most were frame;
Two or three of some renown,
Not fine enough to bring us fame.
Sometimes, we traveled the railroad track
When our saw-dust walks were bad,
Clear to the Simmons' farm, and back,
A pleasure that we often had.

Joyful sounds from the old church steeple
On Sunday morning would fill the air,
A heavenly call to the village people,
Inviting them to the house of prayer.
The schoolhouse then was very small;
You might say short, like our education.
It wouldn't begin to hold us all,
So part of the time we were on vacation.

A sadness comes, when I think today
Of one loved place we used to stop,
Knowing the men have passed away
Who worked in the wagon and blacksmith shop.
But automobiles take the wagon's place;
And with traction cars and electric light,
We look about, and have to face
The fact we are growing day and night.

OUT O' DATE

Well I'll declare, I wonder now
What the world's comin' to any how.
The way their speedin' up of late
Shows me that I'm plumb out o' date.
Which ever road I take today
I'm gittin' right square in the way.

Time was I never thought I'd own
This blamed thing called a telephone.
Then, if old friends would want to talk
They'd either ride a horse, or walk
Way over to some neighbor's place
And do their talkin' face to face.

Now 'lectric cars go whizzin' by
And autos that kin' almost fly.
There's movin' pictures by the score
Sent clean from Hollywood to our door.
Who ever thought sich things could be,
Way back in eighteen sixty-three?

I must'a been most awful green,
The first picture I saw on the screen.
A feller come out there with a gun,
And when he shot towards me, I run.
But now, I'm gittin' more used to it,
Though I'm a little bit nervous yit.

But my, how the radio makes me stare
When it's grabbin' music out of the air
From away off some'rs in another state,
When there ain't no static to pesticate.
I git so excited and bothered, you see,
I have to look in a mirror, to see if it's me.

The very first airplane I saw go by,
Away up there like a bird in the sky,
I stopped and looked, and wondered by ging,
How the sam hill they hatched the thing.
There's a whole lot more I wanted to quote,
But I just can't do it, fer they've got my goat.

LEST WE FORGET

If our lives held only bliss
Do you think that we would know
How to sympathize with others,
Whose hearts are filled with woe?

If we were always vigorous
And had abundant wealth
Would we know the needs of others
Who had only feeble health?

If we lived only in the dawn
Of warmth and summer light
Would we forget that many
Have to face a wintry night?

If ours was just a path of joy
Without a care or load
Would we forget the weary
On a steep and rocky road?

If the Lord had never sent His Son
How would He ever know
Of the mercy and forgiveness
That we need down here below?

There's so much for us to think of
That we own up with regret
A number of important things
We do sometimes forget.

SMILES

No trouble to smile when the sun shines bright,
When there's not a man you owe in sight,
But oh my brother! you ought to be proud
If you can smile while under the cloud
That hovers about when you are sick,
For it's difficult then for your smile to stick.

When the cheering light of the early dawn
Makes diamonds grow on the dewey lawn,
Anyone then, can see by your face
You've got your old time smile in place,
But when it turns cold and snows in May
Away goes your smile that very day.

Your smile will desert you if you're mad
But will hurry back when you are glad.
I've tried it both ways, so I ought to know
That a smile is mighty quick to go
From the face of a fellow feelin' blue,
It may happen that very way with you.

Sometimes there's a reason for feelin' blue,
When providence fails to smile on you.
But if you hold on to the smile you've got
It will get so used to the same old spot
There'll be no home for it any place
Except where you're keepin' it, on your face.

Your clothes are forgotten when you're gone,
But never, the smile that you had on.
On any face there is plenty of room
For joy to find a place to bloom.
And a real warm summer smile, remember,
Will help out a lot in cold December.

You can't fool the world, or deceive yourself,
With your old time smile laid on the shelf.
And your friends will say, "You're lookin' bad;
Where is the little old smile you had?"
You're surely takin' the world all wrong.
Forget your troubles and sing a song.

OLD PAL OF MINE

Old pal of mine, I think of you
As my best friend, with heart so true
That every day of every year
You've been close by my soul to cheer,
So very near that you would stand
Where I could reach and clasp your hand.

And as we wandered hand in hand
O'er paths of earth throughout the land,
Each hour was one of joy with you,
While skies above were azure blue;
That's just the way life seems to be,
When I'm with you, and you're with me.

Life has its disappointments here
When clouds of sadness may appear.
You sympathize when I am sad,
But if I'm happy you are glad.
Though I must face the gloom of night,
Your smile cheers like the morning light.

I know we both have older grown
Since other days that we have known,
But wondrous hope of future days
Come to me through the evening haze

As we keep step through purple light
'Till shadows lengthen into night.

The paths we've traveled here below
Have not been roads to wealth I know,
But with a friendship just like yours
I have a fortune that endures.
Now this I crave, at last to be
Close by you through eternity.

If you should reach that blest abode
While I am still upon the road,
I'll follow, though you're lost from sight
And find you by the brilliant light
Of stars set in your golden crown
Among the saints of great renown.

SMOKIN' TERBACKER

Now Jake, was a feller I always liked,
  But there was jest one single blot
On the snow white page agin' him;
  You see Jake smoked a powerful lot.
He'd fill up that old pipe of his'n
  Soon as it was barely light,
Smokin' all the day, clean through,
  And then he'd smoke again at night.

He'd fill her up with leaf, or scrap,
  And pack it down tight in the bowl.
Next he'd hunt 'round fer a match;
  Then joy would seem to fill his soul.
He'd set around and watch the smoke
  Go floatin' off up towards the sky,
Till finally it was lost from view
  All mixed up with the clouds on high.

Jake got riled at the preacher once
  Fer sayin' that he thought he'd go,
If he kept smokin' like he did,
  To some place where it didn't snow.
But Jake, he low'd it was no sin;
  He'd always smoked since he was 'leven
And after all, the time would come
  When maybe, he might git to heaven.

But what surprised us most of all
Was when he went and married Nan.
I told him then it wouldn't do
Fer him, or any other smokin' man.
You see, I'd know'd her all her life
And saw her always lookin' neat;
Then when she'd go out all dressed up
The folks would say, "don't Nan look sweet."

I always knowed that Nan was good
But I was sure that she'd git mad
If Jake kept smokin' that old pipe
Around the house, jest like he had.
Jake 'lowed that she'd git used to smoke,
And maybe learn to like the smell
Of his old pipe there in the house
After they'd been married fer a spell.

But when I passed there, sure enough,
It happened jest like I had said.
For there was Jake on chilly days
Smokin' in the old wood shed.
She said the pipe he smoked so much
Had got to smell so awful strong
She had to fire it out o' doors,
And where it went, Jake went along.

DREAMS OF CHILDHOOD

I won't say I'm growing old,
When the memories like pure gold
Of my childhood days come back,
And I look out o'er the track
Where the joys of youth it seems
Greet me now in happy dreams.

Now, don't think I'm fast asleep
When with half-closed eyes I peep
As these memory pictures stand
Reaching out to clasp my hand,
Leading me along the way
That I still would love to stray.

Feet are bare as when a boy
I went running wild with joy.
Fish I saw then in the streams
Are still large now in my dreams
As we climb the fence, and roam
Through the fields away from home.

Then at last the sunset's glow
Hints that we should homeward go,
Tramping back again, to where
There are friends our joys to share,
Mother waiting at the door,
With welcome smile, as that of yore.

You can't blame me very much
When these memory chords I touch,
If I sing a song in praise
Of these merry youthful days,
Sometimes sad, but more times glad,
Just thinking of the fun I had.

When the memories filled with cheer
Sometimes bring with them a tear,
I just look up with a laugh
Knowing joys are more than half,
Wishing that these dreams would last
Until all my days have passed.

HOW LONG ARE YOU GON'A STAY?

They like to tell a tale on me
  Of things I done when I was small,
And how, when visitors called on us,
  I was apt to meet them in the hall
And before they knew I was about
  I'd look up bashful like and say,
"How long are you folks gon'a stay?"

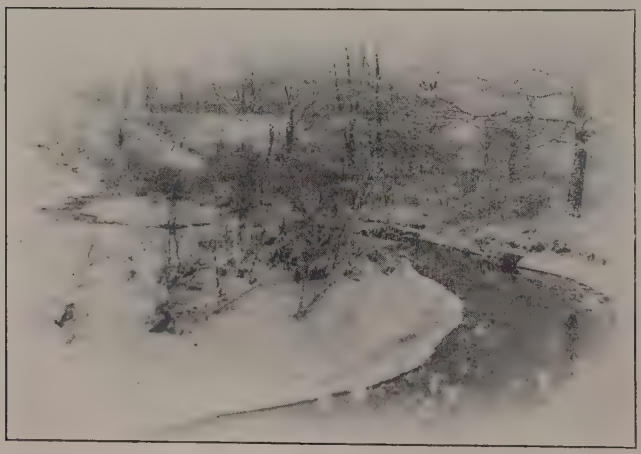
I never will forget it for
  The story has been so often told,
Of how short I was on etiquette
  When I was small and over-bold.
But I'm more diplomatic now;
  I invite them in, and never say,
How long are you folks gon'a stay?

I remember how I was punished
  And all of the family mortified,
How I disliked the folks that called
  While I stayed in the bedroom there and cried.
But now I've learned a better way,
  For when they're good looking, I always say,
You're welcome, come right in and stay.

CHRISTMAS TIME

When all the seasons I recall,
Counting summer, spring and fall,
None brings to us so much of
Pure delight
As this; when Bethlehem's star
Sheds its radiance from afar,
Filling the earth below with
Holy light.

There's a lot of wholesome cheer
To be found this time of year
As we gather in our homes by
Firesides bright;



When our hearts are all aglow
As we meet the friends we know,
And trouble seems to vanish from
Our sight.
Friends of ours, wher'er they roam,
Turn their faces back toward home;
Each one with a smile, I think
Because
While they may not own it's true,
I can guess, and so can you,
They expect to meet their old
Friend Santa Claus.

Let us hope, though rich or poor,
Santa finds each dwelling door
As he travels o'er the land
With friendship true.
And among the gifts and toys
He has wrapped with many joys
That he finds the very best one
Marked for you.

If my wishes all come true
Joy and peace will come to you.
And not a single thing to make
You sad.
And then on Christmas day
With a glad heart you can say,
"This Christmas is the best I
Ever had."

THE HUMAN RACE

I know you'll think I'm out o' place
For criticisin' the human race.
But there are times, when I declare
It's enough to make a preacher swear,
And lose his faith and confidence
When folks find fault with providence.

In summer time, as like as not
They'll say, It's just too awful hot.
And when the winter time comes 'round
With snow flakes driftin' o'er the ground,
Just listen, and you'll hear them then
Prayin' for summer time again.

And so, I say they're mighty queer,
The human race, that's livin' here.
No matter how they're classified
You'll never find them satisfied.
But I'll own up, before I'm through
That I am ashamed of the way I do.

Yes, I belong with this same crowd,
And I'm not feelin' so very proud
Of some of our actions now and then,
When dealin' with our fellow men.
For we're so selfish in our deeds
We seldom think of our neighbor's needs.

We're scarcely thankful for the wealth
That's coined for us in days of health.
But when we're sick in bed a spell
We call back days when we were well,
And ask the Lord then to forgive
Our many sins, and let us live.

Not satisfied with wealth, we say
We must save more for a rainy day.
But the way we keep on hoarding it
You'd think the rain would never quit.
And we forget contentment starts
The joy bells ringing in our hearts.

THE VALLEY OF HOPE

The sun looking out over hill and slope
Discovered for man, this valley of hope.
"Here in this place," the pioneers said,
"We can make our home when we are wed."
And the heaven they thought so far away
They found in their home that early day.

A lonely spot, some folks would say,
Away back there from the main highway.
But the songs they caught from the whispering breeze
That found its way from the hill-side trees
Made me wish that I could share
A part of their joy in the valley there.

Their hearts rejoiced when the morning sun
Crowned the hills, as the day begun;
Then looking down with a brighter glow
To gladden the valley there below.
Though oft-times weary, their days were spent
'Midst nature's scenes, with hearts content.

I'd love to spend a day down there
Where the silence is sweetened ev'rywhere
By the song birds hid away some place
Singing their musical notes of grace.
And then just rest the whole day, free.
That would be pleasure enough for me.

OLD-FASHIONED

I'm kind o' old-fashioned I'll admit,
I never dress fine fer people to see
But most of the time I wear my clothes
To keep the folks from seein' me.
I never eat dinner at six p. m.
Fer that's my supper time you see;
Why some folks call that dinner hour
Is a thing that's always puzzled me.

Now if I eat breakfast at six a. m.
Then wait 'till night fer dinner, I swear
I couldn't live through that at all;
Why, I'd be as hungry as a bear.
I know I've got a lot of faults,
Sometimes I'm criticised by my wife;
Specially times when she catches me
Eatin' my custard pie with a knife.

I don't owe a cent to a livin' man
But everything to my God above.
If he'd collect for all I owe Him,
I'd be a bankrupt, but for His love.
I like the folks I mingle with;
They treat me well though I'm out o' style.
So, I'm pretty well contented, you see,
To have them greet me with a smile.

Yet, I like to get away from the crowd,
Away somewhere from the busy street.
Out on some quiet spot of earth
Where God and nature seem to meet.
For there I can offer up a prayer
Where none but God can hear and see,
Knowing that he will understand,
Though I'm as old-fashioned as can be.

WHEN MOTHER'S SICK

My, but the days and nights are long
When mother's sick, and things go wrong.
And dad with such a solemn look
Will say,
"Now kids, If you play 'bout the house,
You must be quiet as a mouse,
For your mother's feelin' mighty bad
Today."

Then, we will do our very best
To be real still, and let her rest,
And try so hard to not make
Any fuss.
Why, if we knew how, and could,
Times like this, we'd be so good
You'd think the angels lived there
'Stead of us.

When mother's sick for quite a spell,
Oh, how we wish that she'd get well.
Then half asleep we'd dream the whole
Night long.
All day, no jelly on our bread,
No one to tuck us snug in bed,
No one to croon a soothing twilight
Song.

But when our mother's well again,
You ought to hear us shouting then.
And we, right then as just a
Small reward,
Say all the prayers we ever had,
Because we are so mighty glad,
And want to try our best to
Thank the Lord.

STAYIN' HOME

Do you ever git to thinkin'
That you'd like to go away,
Leavin' all your friends at home?
Well, I git that a way.
Specially here o' late,
With all this ice and snow
A hangin' 'round and facin' me
Which ever way I go.

You kin hardly blame a feller
Fer fellin' bad, like me,
Where every single thing is dead,
Or, if it ain't, it soon will be.
Why, I kin jest go gazin' 'round
No matter what I chance to see,
There's not a livin' thing in sight
That's green, exceptin' me.

It ain't no trouble now, you see,
Fer me to figger out
If I had any gump at all
I'd never hang about
Where I must sneeze and cough;
But I'd be trampin' where
The water's nice and warm,
And then, I'd jump in there.

But now, I'm stayin' here you see,
Wastin' all these precious hours!
When I'd a whole lot ruther be
Snoopin' 'round among the flowers.
But then I can't make up my mind
To migrate with the birds, down there,
And yet, I know I'd like the songs
They're singin' in that southern air.

And then again, I figger out,
It might be lonesome-like to roam
So far from where I've always been,
Leavin my friends up north at home.
So I'll jest stay right where I am
Where all the leaves are off the trees;
Wear warmer clothes, and hang around
No matter if I almost freeze.

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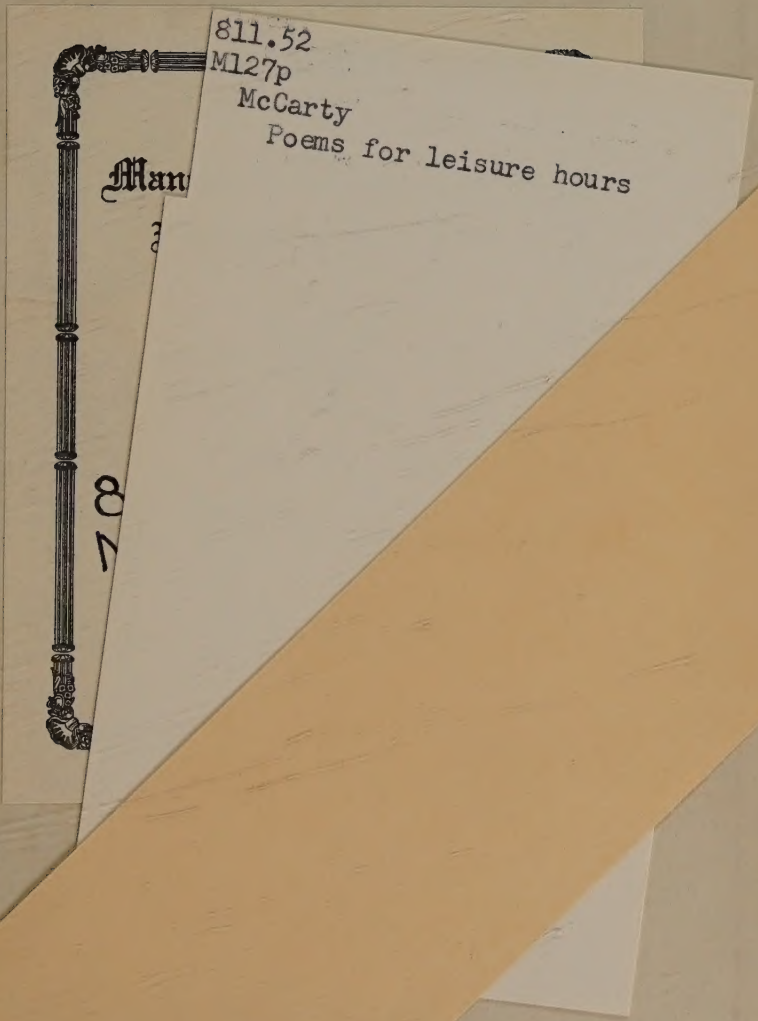

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